







THE SECRET A  
HISTORY

OF THE  
MOST RENOWN'D  
Q. ELIZABETH,  
AND  
Earl of ESSEX.

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By a PERSON of QUALITY.

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COLOGNE:

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THE *James*  
Earl of *ESSEX*:  
OR THE  
A M O U R S  
O F  
Queen *ELIZABETH*.

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P A R T I.

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\*\*\*\*\* H E People had seen *Essex*  
\* T \* in extraordinary Favour  
\* \* \* with the \* Queen; and  
\*\*\*\*\* were therefore the more  
surprized at his Fall. She had raised  
him to the highest Dignities of her  
A 3 Kingdom;

Kingdom ; and he continued then General of her Army in *Ireland*, against the Earl of *Tyrone*, who had raised a Rebellion there. His Endeavours to divert this Misfortune were vain ; and after an obstinate Relistance he was brought up to *London*, and confin'd to his House.

The Services he had done the State by his Valour were very considerable ; but the Favours the Queen's peculiar Goodness had heaped on him proceeded from a far more secret Cause, and more pressing Motives. Had the Earl of *Essex* never signaliz'd himself by the Glory of his Actions, the Kindness she had for him would have made her distinguish him from the rest of her Subjects ; and 'tis certain her Affections had made him her Favourite, before he could pretend to it in the least by his Services. She was highly renown'd above the Women of her Time for Courage and Strength of Mind ; yet too  
weak



weak to be Proof against the Impressions of Love. She had a passionate Tenderness for the unfortunate Criminal, which was his Advocate, and defended him from the Severity of Justice ; and was so far from taking Pleasure of publick Revenge of him, that she abhorred in her Heart those cruel Maxims that cross'd her Inclinations.

She kept her Bed, to prevent the least publick Discovery of a Trouble it was not in her Power to conceal, and admitting of no Company but the Countess of *Nottingham* (her intimate Confident) she gave Vent to her Tears, and freely lamented the Misfortune that threatened the Repose of her Life.

The Countess had a little suspected the Queen's Inclination, and thought herself obliged by powerful Reasons to find out the Mystery. But this being a tender Point, and having to deal with a Princess naturally of a very high Spirit, the Coun-

tefs was filent. But the Queen's Grief was too violent to continue long mute ; her Sighs confirmed the Suspitions of the Countefs, and her repeating in her Trouble the Earl of *Essex's* Name, convinced the Countefs of the Truth of what till then ſhe had but ſlightly fancied.

The Countefs had that Command of herſelf, that ſhe eaſily concealed Concern in the Adventure ; and appearing only ſenſible of the Trouble of the Queen, ſhe uſed all the Art ſhe had to comfort her ; and failed not to put her in Mind, how ſerviceable on that Occaſion, her Virtue might be to her, which had already made her the Wonder of the World.

Ah, Madam ! (ſays the Queen, interrupting her) You do not yet know me. The Force I have long put upon myſelf, hath made you think, with the reſt of the World, that the Height of my Spirits hath raiſed  
me

me above the Infirmities of Nature, and the Greatness of my Thoughts secured me from the Troubles of Life; but alas! poor *Elizabeth* is a Slave to her Weakness and hath all this while but sacrificed to Reputation, all the Quiet of her Soul, and Happiness of her Days!

X 'Tis high Time, Madam, to reveal the Mystery.

My Heart, Madam, is sensible and susceptible of the deepest Impressions, and what I have in Appearance condemned most, is perhaps the only Thing that has most Power over me.

The Earl of *Essex* is not less famous for the Victory gained over my Heart, than for his Treasons against me: And I, who have always maintained the Freedom of my Soul, and preserved the Liberty of my Affection from submitting to the Efforts of all the noted Princes of *Europe*, and the greatest of my Subjects, have now the Misfortune to find my In-

clinations violently swayed in Favour of a Person, as ungrateful as faithless. You know what I have done to raise him; nor can you be ignorant how ill he hath requited me by his Crimes. A Man, who being Governor of *Ireland*, General of my Army, in quiet Possession of the best Offices of my Kingdom, and Master of my Affection, yet could not forbear conspiring against that Authority I was but too much inclined to give him a Share of; and, perhaps, against a Life I took no other Pleasure in, but the Opportunities I had by it to make him happy.

It was not in the Queen's Power to say one Word more. And the Countess more than ordinarily concerned at the Discourse, became so much the more curious; and pretending to comfort the Queen, engaged her very dexterously to a further Discovery.

No, Madam, (replies the Queen) there is no Hope of Comfort for me, if the Earl of *Essex* die: By the Condition



dition you see his imprisonment hath put me in, you may guess what I am like to be reduced to by his Death. His Crimes I abhor, but am in Love with his Person, and find, that as I have been so weak to let him know it, I shall again be so weak to pardon him. You do not know his Carriage towards me; and perhaps my Affection will as easily find Excuses for his Ingratitude, as it did for my Kindness. I will give you the Relation of it, but conjure you to reproach me so plainly with the Shame I expose myself to, that I may at last prevail with myself to abandon the ungratefulest of Men, to the Rigour of his Fate.

I shall not give you an Account of the Interest of *England*, other than what the Earl of *Essex* stands concerned in. I will pass by the Obstacles raised against my *Establishment*, and tell you only, I quickly gained Possession of the Throne, was adored by my People, and

and happy beyond the Hopes of a Person of my Sex. But Elevation is not always attended with the Pleasure of Life; and that smooth Gale of Felicity and Repose in the Beginning of my Reign, quickly blew over, at least, in my Opinion.

Being settled in my Government, I found my Court throng'd with Suitors of Sovereign Grandeur, striving to merit the Choice it was in my Power [at once] to make of a Husband and a King. The Earls of *Somerset*, *Leicester*, *Arundel*, and *Hertford*, had the most Right to pretend to it. But finding myself disturb'd by their Importunities in my most serious Affairs, and not at all inclined to entertain their Suits, I formally declared to them, X I designed to live single, and endeavoured to make them amends, by considerable Employments, and Alliances, I bestow'd on them : Three of them openly quitted the hopes they had conceived : Only the Earl  
of

of *Leicester*, more ambitious, or more constant than the rest, kept a-foot his Pretensions, and publickly continued his Services: But it was not ordain'd his Perseverance should be crowned with the Reward of my Affection.

The Earl of *Essex* having signaliz'd himself against the rebellious Earls of *Northumberland* and *Westmoreland*, made about this Time his first Appearance at Court, and so found with more Ease the Secret to please me.

Those who presented him to me spoke much in Commendation of him, and I was too much an Eye-Witness of the Merit of his Person. I looked upon him as an extraordinary Man: Nor could I but think it equally extraordinary to find myself so strangely affected with him at the first sight. The Reception I gave him was very obliging, and the Acknowledgments he made me were full of Respect: so that for the

the Time, I saw no Cause to check my Inclination.

I may date from this first View the Loss of my Repose. I presently fell into a Disquiet I had till then been altogether a Stranger to. And in Spight of my high Spirit, I could not but inwardly acknowledge the Cause; and all the Efforts of my haughty Humour against it, served only to make the Triumph of the Earl of *Essex* the more glorious.

You would better comprehend the Condition I was in, did you know the Resentments of a great Soul, jealous of its Reputation, in Extremities of this Nature; the Combat it undergoes, and the Confusion that attends the Defence.

X I fear'd my Eyes would discover the Pleasure I took in looking on the Earl of *Essex*, and my Weakness occasioned Discourses in the World to the Prejudice of my Glory. I shunned the Sight of him, but to little Purpose, when I carried



ried the Idea of him in my Heart. I was angry with myself for it, and summoned my Reason to my assistance to declare it: But Love had so violently seized my Heart, that I struggled in vain to dispossess him.

By little and little I yielded myself Captive to that powerful Inclination, which had at first Sight made me so much in Love with the Person of the Earl of *Essex*: And pretending the Services he had done me against the Earls of *Northumberland* and *Westmoreland*, and the Memory I had of the good Services of his Father, as the Ground of my Favour, I made him Knight of the Garter, Master of the Horse, and of the Privy Council, though under Age.

Thus did I cherish and indulge the Weakness I had so long struggled with, and condemned myself for. The higher he grew in Office, the nearer he was to my Person: His Complaisance, his Respect,

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spect, his Looks, which to me appeared all kind and languishing, and especially my affection, which had Tenderness enough to give a favourable Construction to the least of his Actions, conspired to betray me.

Envy raised him Enemies: The Earl of *Leicester*, concerned to be jealous of him, quickly suspected the Truth; and looking on the Earl of *Effex* as a Person of Merit, capable to cross his Pretensions, he made it his Business to supplant him; which I presently observed. I easily foresaw the Trouble my Favour might cause between Persons so considerable: And the better to countenance the Kindness I had for *Effex*, I affected a little Complaisance for *Leicester*, which somewhat abated the Edge of his Jealousy.

About that Time the King of *Sweden*, the Emperor, for his Son, and the Duke of *Anjou*, made me their several Proposals of Marriage, which



which I was forced to receive, but wanted not Pretences to send home their Ambassadors, without any Fruit of their Negociation.

How contrary to the real Motive of my Actions were the Interpretations Men made of my Refusal of Marriage with those Princes! It redounded much to my Honour, my Glory was encreased by it, and the World admired my Contempt of Love, even when my Soul was wholly possessed by it.

The Aversion I express'd for Foreign Alliances, raised the Hopes of the Earl of *Leicester*; and *Effex* seem'd overjoyed at it; not, said he, as I heard afterwards, but that the Queen is discreet in all her Actions; and her choice, had she made one, had been decent and just; but that I think her so fit to reign alone, that I could not, without extreme Trouble, see her share her Authority with a Husband, who perhaps would in Time be her Master.

The

The Construction I made of the Earl of *Essex's* Zeal was suitable to my affection, and the Desire I had of gaining his Heart; which I desired so passionately, That I fancied it done, and that the pretended Severity that made me slight Kings, was the only Thing that frightened his Respect, and that he had declared his Love to me, could he have thought he durst presume to do it.

The Duke of *Alençon* (not discouraged by my refusal of his Brother) began soon after to make Addresses for himself; and it was not in my Power to deny my Consent for his Voyage to *London*: But what Advantages soever he pleaded in his Favour, certain it is, the Earl of *Essex* lost not any he had gained over me. The Stay of that Prince in *England* fortified the Earl's Interest. He was constantly at my Elbow. When the Duke of *Alençon* spoke to me, methought I read Reproaches against myself, in the Earl  
of

of *Essex's* Eyes. The Earl of *Leicester* watched me as carefully, tho' not with equal Regard from me. I raised so many Difficulties against the Duke of *Alençon's* Design that he was forced to desist; and I rid my Hands of his Person and Suit, without giving him Cause of Complaint.

You know, that after the Death of the Queen of *Scots*, the King of *Spain*, who still makes himself indispensibly subject to a Necessity of opposing me, entered into a League with the Pope against me. And having filled the World with injurious Declarations against my Right to the Crown, they joined all their Forces to pull it off my Head. The *Spaniards* made themselves on the sudden Masters of *Daventer*. The Duke of *Parma* laid Siege to *Sluys*. It was high Time to provide for Defence; and the Earl of *Leicester* was sent away with all the Nobility of the Kingdom, at the Head of a  
nume-

numerous Army. The Earl of *Essex* was one of the first to follow him; and as strongly inclined as I was to stay him, yet I thought the Man I loved ought not to be idle, when he had Opportunity, by glorious Actions, to merit the kindness I had for him.

I will not spend Time in giving you the Relation of a War, which perhaps you are sufficiently informed of, and concerns not the Secrets of my Life. It tended to our Advantage; all (to the very Winds) having favour'd our Side. When the Generals of the Army arrived at *London*, I was carried in Triumph to *St. Paul's*: Yet the Joy I had to see the Earl of *Essex*, was greater than that for the signal Victory obtained. Amongst an infinite Number of Persons of several Ranks, my Eyes were fixed only on him: And much ado I had, sometimes out of Policy, to cast a Look on the Earl of *Leicester*: Both of them  
had

had done very great Actions: I commended them publickly; and particularly joyed the Earl of *Effex* for the Success of his Valour and Conduct; who spoke so much in Praise of the Valour and Conduct of the Earl of *Leicester*, that he was forced, in Requitall, to do him Right, in giving him openly the Elogies he deserved.

Not long after this Expedition, the Earl of *Effex* fell into a very deep Melancholy: I was the first that perceived it; and took it for an Effect of some secret Passion. I wish'd now and then he would once take the Boldness to declare himself, but presently my Reason, upon second Thoughts, set before my Eyes the Confusion would certainly follow an Explication of that Nature, to the Ruin of my Reputation, and that high Esteem the World had for me; yet (to speak Truth) I could not resolve what to do or to wish: I was in Love, I desired to be loved again;



again; and that was all I could make of it.

The Earl of *Essex* in the mean Time continued sad; I was troubled to see him so; and fancying myself the Cause, I was desirous to know it; and resolved to fetch it out of him.

He had full Liberty of Access to me, and I enlarged it daily; but not to expose my Reputation, in forcing him to declare himself, I pretended an Inclination to favour the Earl of *Leicester*; who since his late Victories, had entertained new Hopes.

One Day as the Earl of *Essex* came to thank me for the Government of *Ireland* I had bestowed on him, I was loth to lose the Opportunity; and interrupting what he would have said in Acknowledgement, *You need not enlarge yourself,* (said I) *on a Thing I am fully assur'd of. I take Pleasure in raising your Fortune, and wish I could as easily*  
*remov*

remove your Melancholy, as I am  
 pleased to give a new Proof of the  
 Sense I have of your service. You  
 may, in your turn oblige me, (ad-  
 ded I) who am fallen into a trouble-  
 some Conjuncture, and find it very  
 difficult to reduce my Affections in-  
 to a Compliance with the Necessity of  
 the State; this presses me hard to  
 provide England a King; this Choice  
 is difficult, and I have not a Mind  
 to make it among Foreigners: You  
 are discreet, and I have Reason to  
 believe not the least loving of my Sub-  
 jects. I will take your Advice; speak  
 your Mind freely, what Man in En-  
 gland you think best deserves this For-  
 tune.

I look'd upon him with that Kind-  
 ness as would have inspired the most  
 Fearful with Boldness: I observed  
 in his Eyes extraordinary Emotions,  
 and all the Symptoms of a Secret  
 ready to break out. The Point ap-  
 peared tender, and my Imagination  
 flattered me, all would be as I  
 wish'd.

wish'd: ' Your Majesty's Resolution,  
 ' cry'd he, will render a man more  
 ' glorious by the Quality of your  
 ' Husband, than of the greatest Mo-  
 ' narch on Earth.' ' Remember, said I,  
 ' I expect not a Panegyric, but Ad-  
 ' vice from you, and that your Bu-  
 ' siness at present is to nominate the  
 ' Man I am to make King; not to  
 ' commend his good Fortune in being  
 ' so.' ' The Business is so nice, Madam,  
 ' replies he, I dare not speak my  
 ' Mind tho' your Majesty order it.  
 ' Did you know, said I, what moves  
 ' to this Confidence in you, you would  
 ' perhaps express yourself with a  
 ' great deal more Freedom; but be-  
 ' cause to bring you to it, I must pro-  
 ' ceed further, Tell me whether you  
 ' think the Earl of *Leicester* deserves  
 ' to be your Prince?' ' The Earl of *Lei-*  
 ' *cester*, (answers he) is well born, and  
 ' a Person of great Merit, and will  
 ' answer the Honour your Majesty in-  
 ' tends him. Is that all you have to say  
 ' to me, said I! Ah, Madam, replied  
 he,

he, with a Sigh, which made me expect something more pleasing, I should have more to say to you for myself, than the Earl of *Leicester*. What hinders you? said I. The Respect I have for your Majesty, answer'd he: I am in Love, Madam, but it is not a Thing fitting to make my Queen Confident. I blush'd at those Words, and was in a Mind not to proceed further. But I look'd upon him, and there needed no more to declare my Weakness: I have that Esteem for you, added I, that I am not unwilling to be of your Council. Well, Madam, since you will have it so, continues he, I must acquaint you I am desperately in love with the Countess of *Rutland*; and that I cannot live, if your Majesty consent not that she shall make me happy.

You may easily guess what an Astonishment I was in at this Explanation, having upon so good Grounds expected to have heard myself

B

named;

named; it is well for me I had not altogether lost the Haughtiness of my Nature; the poor Remains of it were my only Helps to preserve me from discovering more Weakness to the Earl than he had discovered Love for his Mistress. His Transports helpt me to recover mine. He perceived not the Blow he had given me, and sacrificing my Grief to my Glory, I affected to appear calm and unconcerned, when my Soul was full of Trouble and Confusion. You have made a very good Choice, said I, and the Countess of *Rutland* will well deserve the Kindness you profess of her. Madam, replied he, with Satisfaction in his Looks, which heighten'd my Grief, you have done more for me, in approving the passion I have for the Countess of *Rutland*, than you could have done, had you procured me the Empire of the Universe. It is your Desire then, added I, with a Sigh my Despair forced from me, that I should



I should give her to you? I desire any  
 thing says he, that may preserve me  
 from dying for Love of her. Go  
 your way then, said I, to be rid of  
 him, and ease myself of the intoler-  
 able Constraint I was under, be as-  
 sured I will concern myself in your  
 Amour. You shall know it in Time.  
 But take heed you give not the Earl  
 of *Leicester* the least Intimation of  
 the Secret I have imparted to you.  
 Not before I have Orders from your  
 Majesty, answered he, to congratu-  
 late his Happiness, and pay him the  
 Devoirs of an affectionate Subject.

Had you seen with what an Air  
 he pronounced these Words, you  
 would have abhorr'd him for his  
 Ingratitude. As for me, I was left  
 in so desperate a Condition, it was  
 long ere I could recover my Reason  
 out of the Entanglements of Love,  
 Anger, and Jealousy.

I was partly the Author of my  
 Misfortune, by calling to Court the  
 Countess of *Rutland*, after her Hus-

band's Death, without considering she was one of the handsomest Ladies on Earth, and but sixteen Years old. I had not observed any particular Kindness the Earl of *Essex* had for her : He visited her as other Ladies of the Court. But their Intrigue was mysterious; and the more securely it was carried, the Engagement was the stronger, and the Affection more tender.

It is impossible to express the Trouble I was in, when Anger seized the Place Grief had possess in my Heart. Though the Earl of *Essex* had been ignorant of his good Fortune, I could not forbear reproaching him for slighting it as he did, and forgot not to charge him with Treachery and Ingratitude. But when I considered he was so far from apprehending my Meaning, that he was gone directly to make a solemn Tender of his Love to another, and carry her the joyful news of his Success with me; I resolved at

at least to delay the Pleasure of it  
 for a Time, and went out of my  
 Closet into my Chamber, to call  
 him back. I thought I heard the  
 Earl of *Leicester's* Voice and his in  
 the Anti-Chamber, and going to  
 the Door, found I was not mis-  
 taken. *Leicester's* Jealousy had,  
 in all Probability, made him watch *Effex* as he entered my Chamber ;  
 and when he saw him return with  
 Satisfaction in his Looks : You are  
 happy, says he, in a Privilege, to  
 entertain the Queen as long as you  
 please ; when others who, as passion-  
 ately desire it, can't obtain that Hap-  
 piness for a Moment. I am persuaded,  
 replied *Effex*, you better deserve it ;  
 and make no doubt but you will  
 find more Pleasure in it. I'll leave  
 you at Liberty to go in Search of it,  
 and you may do me a Favour not to  
 stay me, being called another Way,  
 on a very pressing Occasion. He  
 had no sooner said so, but he went  
 his Way ; and I was so confounded

with this new Sight, I scarce knew where I stood. Having at last recovered my Reason, I had the Discretion to hide my Weakness. Presently my Anger would have vented itself on the Countess of *Rutland*: But I considered her only Crime was her Beauty; and that she knew not my Concern of her Servant.

The Earl of *Leicester* having at his Entrance preceived me in Disorder, durst not take Notice of it, but after a short Visit withdrew.

A little before, I had sent to congratulate the King of *Navarre*, upon his coming to the Crown of *France*; and having intelligence he wanted Aid to secure his Government, I resolved to send him some, under the Conduct of the Earl of *Essex*, in Hopes his Absence might cure me. I would have persuaded myself, the Cause of my removing him on that Occasion, was my Desire to forget him; but upon  
second

knew second thoughts, I must confess, it  
 st re- was rather the Desire of removing  
 e Dis- him out of the Sight of a beloved  
 Pre- Rival.

ented Being resolved on the Point, I  
 land : hasten'd the Execution, and having  
 Crime ordered the Earl of *Essex* to attend  
 knew me ; you love Honour, said I to  
 t. him, and I cannot think you will  
 ng at prefer the Pleasure of fighting be-  
 Disor- fore a Mistress, to the Opportunities  
 , but of acquiring Glory : I have provid-  
 con- ed one for you ; and am resolved  
 up- you shall command the Troops I  
 n of am sending to the *French* King. To  
 ce he fortify therefore yourself against the  
 vern- Troubles of Absence, you need only  
 come, think of the Pleasure of a Return.  
 rl of His Answer was only Sighs, and  
 ight that passionate Language made me  
 aded hasten his Departure.

ving Soon after, the Countess of *Rut-*  
 my land (whom I could not forbear  
 upon using very mildly) desired leave to  
 cond go into the Country a considerable  
 Distance from *London*. I had then  
 so



being alive with a thousand Transports of Joy. I was extremely pleased with the Report of his Arrival at *London*. But when I considered I should see him full of Love for another, and that, perhaps, I should not be able to conceal my Jealousy, I was tempted to order him to give the Council an Account of his Conduct, and not admit him into my Presence. I was sometimes of the Opinion I should be able to do so; but this weak Heart of mine, so prepossessed in Favour of him, revolted against all my Resolutions. I must follow my Inclinations, and see the most dangerous Enemy of my Repose, the Troubler of my Rest. He came to *Whitehall*; I admitted him to my Presence. I looked upon him, and in spite of all my high Spirit, he saw nothing but Kindness in all my Actions.

You may soon imagine what an agreeable Surprize it was to me, to find, at our first Conference, that

that Absence had weaned his Affections from the Countess of *Rutland*. He appeared no longer in that languishing Melancholy I observed him in before his Departure. He had Satisfaction in his Looks. The air of his Actions were smooth and calm. And I fancied as much Joy in his Face, though the Countess of *Rutland* was absent, as I felt in myself, at the Explication he made. I see you again returned with Victory, (said I) but am sorry it is not in my Power to reward your Toil with the Sight of the Countess of *Rutland*. But if any thing I can do, can comfort you.-- I am easily comforted for her Absence, when I am permitted to see your Majesty, answered he. I have no ~~Passion~~ now but for the Glory of serving your Majesty; and the Countess of *Rutland* is now to me no more than other Ladies of the Court. Are you no longer in Love with the Countess of *Rutland*?

[ re-

[replied I] between Joy and Distrust. You have spoken it too fast. When you see her again-- When I see her again, says he, interrupting me, it shall be without those Transports I exprest for her, not forgetting the Respect due to your Majesty. What, answered I, are you not afraid of the Reproaches of a *provok'd Mistress* ? No, Madam, said he, in a free and unconcerned Manner ; all I am concerned for is to do my Duty and approve myself worthy of your Majesty's Favour. This answered I, deserves my Acknowledgement ; and Time shall let you see I am not ungrateful.

Thus did the Earl of *Essex* assure me he was cured of his first Passion ; and was I in Hopes it might be in my Power to see him one Day entertain another.

A Week after, he desired Leave to go into the Country, about his private Affairs : He was absent a Fortnight ; and returned  
more

more calm and unconcern'd, than ever.

The Earl of *Leicester* had doubled his Importunities in the Absence of the Earl of *Effex* in *France* and *Spain*; and obliged me at last, to put him out of Hopes. He is naturally bold, and was so blown up with the Opinion of the Glory he had gain'd by some late Atchievements, that he proceeded to telling me plainly, He was jealous of the Earl of *Effex*; and would have made a Crime of the Discourse, I told you of, past between them, as *Effex* left my Chamber. The Answer I made him, was an absolute Command, he should be silent; which was so far obeyed, that, after some Days murmuring, he held his Peace. Yet this put me in mind to observe some Measures, and not to follow openly my Inclinations.

Things continued in this State, till the Troubles of *Ireland*. I had often opened my Mouth to

let

let the Earl of *Essex* know the Advantage he had over me; but Modesty shut it again; yet seeing him under a Necessity of going for *Ireland*, when the Earl of *Tyrone* had raised a general Rebellion, I had not the Power to let him take his leave without acquainting him, That the Kingdom was at his Command. Upon the first News of the Troubles, he threw himself at my Feet, begging the Honour of my Command, to go and quiet those Disorders.— You have done enough, said I, and there's no need you should, by exposing yourself to new Dangers, oblige me to new Acknowledgments. I doubt not, Madam, answer'd he, but the Favour I beg of your Majesty, will be envy'd me; but I take the Boldness to say, Your Majesty can't refuse it me, without doing yourself Injury: It being an occasion may contribute to my meriting the Favour you have already honour'd me with.—The Ardour you express for undertaking



taking great Actions, (replied I) is not perhaps so pleasing as you imagine; and all the good that may rebound to *England* thro' your Valour, is less considerable than the Trouble given me, who takes less Care of my Crown than your Life. I am ambitious: Yet—Ah! my Lord, save me the confusion of a more particular Explication of what you ought, and might easily have long since understood. I might perhaps presume too far in my wishes, says the Earl, in some Disorder. With boldly, cry'd I, I love you; and if I blush to tell you so, 'tis not that I am either ashamed, or repent of it. You may believe this Acknowledgment a very hard Task for a Person of my Humour, who have seen you Sigh for another, when I slighted Kings for your Sake, and would have sacrificed more to your Satisfaction. What, Madam! (cry'd he, like a Man astonished) Have you loved me, and I been so unfortunate

fortunate to make myself unworthy your Kindness by those Sighs I now disavow? Did my Eyes never tell you what I looked for in yours? said I. I never had the Boldness, answered he, to make any such Constructions of your Looks. Your Fear was the Effect of Indifference, said I, but no more of what is past. Tell me now, can you love me? X Rather ask me, Madam, answered he, if all the Affections of my Soul can merit your Love? And whether the Earl of *Leicester*, whom you design to make the happiest Man on Earth, shall not carry the Day from me? The Earl of *Leicester*, said I, was but a Pretence to make you speak. I told you then truly the Thoughts I had of you; my Trouble for you was not small, both in your Absence and since your Return; but all is forgotten. Be henceforth as I wish, and doubt not of being happy.

He

He answered me with some Disorder, which I fancied the Effect of unexpected Joy, I thought it Time to be no longer scrupulous; and that it was in vain to have any Reserve when I had said so much. I must not let you go under any Uncertainty, proceeded I, but to convince you clearly of the Truth of what I have said, take this, said I, delivering him a Ring, as the highest Mark of my Favour, keep it as a Pledge of my Kindness; which I conjure you to preserve in the State it is in, and on that Condition, I promise you, never to deny you any Thing you shall desire of me, when you shew me this Ring, tho' it cost me my Life and Fortune.

His Joy and Acknowledgements at receiving the Ring, were in Appearance, extraordinary and unparalleled: And attended with Promises of as high a Nature.

He went for *Ireland* in a few Days, leaving me fully persuaded his Thoughts

Thoughts were wholly taken up with me. But he had not advanc'd up to the Rebels, but he was charged with all the Crimes which occasion'd his Imprisonment, and that of the Earl of *Southampton*. Then it was I began to repent I had not given Ear to the wholesome Advice *Cecil* would have given me, concerning the secret Conduct of the Earl of *Essex*.

X In a word, while my Thoughts were wholly employed to make his Fortune glorious, he was plotting with the Earl of *Tyrone*, to surprise and make me Prisoner in this Palace.

You know the rest, Madam, his obstinate Resistance, his want of Respect for my orders, his imprisoning my Ministers, his murdering my Soldiers, and his intolerable Pride in all his Misfortunes.

Thus ended the Queen's Discourse, which having called fresh to her Mind all that had passed between her

her and *Essex*, she was more troubled than ever.

The Countess of *Nottingham* had heard her with Attention suitable to her Concern in the Discourse. She, as well as the Queen, had been in Love with the Earl, and advanced many Steps, but in vain, to raise a Passion in him. And having newly understood the Cause of his slighting her, it added infinitely to her former Resentments.

She had no Mind to condemn the Queen's Weakness, knowing herself guilty of the like; nor was she inclin'd to speak in Favour of a Man who was grown so much the more odious to her, as she had formerly passionately lov'd him. She thought it sufficient to comfort the Queen with Discourses seeming to arise only from Zeal for her Service, when, in Truth, her Thoughts were wholly bent for the Ruin of an ingrateful Lover, who, in her Judgment, deserved



deserved nothing but Hatred at her Hands.

Though Love thought not fit the Earl of *Effex* should admire the Countess of *Nottingham*; yet another was her Captive, whose Character did, in a manner, make her amends; it was Secretary *Cecil*, who, amidst his great Offices, and the Gravity that became them, discover'd in the Beauty, Ingenuity, and high Spirit of the Countess of *Nottingham*, some Charms, that made him capable of a strong Passion for her; which was heightened by the Hatred both of them had profess'd against the Earl of *Effex*, *Cecil* having always look'd on him as the invincible Obstacle of his ambitious Pretensions, and the Countess had against him all the Rage and Aversion that usually succeed Kindness abused.

They were glad of the Imprisonment of the Earl of *Effex*, but the favourable Inclinations the Queen express'd for him, alarmed them.

The

The Countess had no sooner taken leave of the Queen, but she gave *Cecil* an Account of what she had learnt. Having considered the Consequences, they concluded it necessary, while their Princess sigh'd secretly for the Prisoner, Means should be found by private Ways and in artful Conduct without their appearing to have any such Design, to take away the Mercy which Love might inspire into her.

*Cecil*, for the first Step, press'd the Queen to bring *Effex* to his Trial; and caused certain News of his Death to be spread throughout *England*.

*Effex*, in the mean Time, was buried with Thoughts of more Weight than those of his Life. He knew well enough the Queen loved him, and knew as well he had deceived her; and that she might, with a great deal of Justice, not only reproach, but condemn him.

The Queen had not seen him since his going into *Ireland*, but having not the Power to give him up to his ill Fortune; without having heard him, she resolved to go to his House, where he was Prisoner, to reproach him as he deserv'd, and endeavour, if possible, to find him innocent.

'Tis not far from *White-hall* to *Essex-House*; and the Queen took so good Order in the Matter that no Notice was taken of the Indecency of the Visit, having been introduced by her Confidants alone into the Chamber of the Criminal. He was surprized at the Presence of the Queen; the languishing Condition she was in, made her Sigh, all went for him, and the Victory seemed easy. He saluted her with a profound Respect; and then fixing on her Face those Eyes of his, which so often charmed her, he fetched  
 & some Tears from hers. Well, my Lord, (says she, drying them) you see

see what I do for you, notwithstanding all the Crimes I can reproach you with, I am come with a Design to hear you, if you have any Thing to say to justify yourself. I have loved you too well, not to wish it above all Things; and, would Heaven were pleased your Justification might be purchas'd with any the most precious Thing in my Power. My greatest Crime is, that I thought myself too happy, Madam, replies the Earl, sighing. Had you rested there, said the Queen, I should have been too well satisfy'd to complain of you, but to believe yourself happy, was it necessary you should betray me? And must you needs have made use of violent Means, to make yourself Master of a Fortune I was willing to share with you? What Reason had you to seek Protection of the Kings of *Scotland* and *Spain*? Did my Interests oblige you to Correspondencies with *Tyron*? And was it for the Safety of my Person,

you

you design'd to make me your Slave and his? All you have done since to my Subjects, against my Orders; Are those the Expressions of your Respect? Is it by Fury and Treason you shew your Zeal for me and the Public? Or is all we have seen and heard of you but Illusion and Fancy? Yes, Madam, replied the Earl, those Accusations of Treason and ill Designs, have run me upon the desperate Resistance I made. You have been pleas'd to heap Favours upon me, and I, too proud of what I so little deserved, flattered myself with the Expectation of a thousand Pleasures which you had not absolutely forbid me to hope for. This let loose the Envy and Jealousy of others against my good Fortune. They abused your Majesty with Misinformations; and I had the Misfortune to be assured, your Majesty had ordered I should be arrested; although my Innocence would have persuaded me to the contrary. I confess, Madam, I was in a  
Rage,



Rage to see my Enemies insult over me; being abandon'd by your Majesty, and on the Point of suffering, perhaps, a shameful Death; I thought it neither for my Reputation, nor your Majesty's Honour I should die as a Criminal. This put me upon having Recourse to those Succours and Assistance they reproach me with, and the Resolution I took to go out of England, in Hopes to confound my Accusers: but I found all the Passages stopt, and I must acknowledge, in that desperate Condition, I vented my Fury by taking Revenge on your Ministers. They, Madam, and only they, were the Objects of the Rebellion I am charged with. My Design was, that only they, who had so industriously labour'd to make me appear guilty, should do me Right, in declaring my Innocence, and permit me to lay it, and my Life, at your Majesty's Feet. I never doubted but your Majesty would have done me the Honour to hear me, and that by a clear Discovery of the Truth, I should have certainly con-

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founded

*found the Envy of my Enemies. But their Malice hath had the Success to see me a Prisoner, hated by my Sovereign, despised by the World, and made a Sacrifice to their Rage; and now what remains but that I receive the Sentence of my Death pronounced by them, and see Cobham, Cecil, Raleigh, and their Fellows, share the Favours you honoured me with? You are well assured I hate you not, says the Queen, interrupting him: But should I believe you? Yet should I not believe you? Can I give you up to the ill Fate that threatens you? I shall never murmur against your Majesty's Orders, replies the Earl, but submit to them readily, whatever they be: But I confess it would make me mad, should my Enemies have the Advantage to condemn me.*

*The Earl of Essex knew the weak Side of the Queen; and easily reviv'd in her that Tenderness he had formerly inspired her with. No, says she (having paus'd awhile) you shall not die, Make use of your Advantages. Triumph*

*Triumph over a Heart whose Inclinations you very well know. I will believe your Intentions less criminal than they appear; but, my Lord I conjure you, by that Kindness, of which you have such particular Experience, that you give me no Cause to repent of it; trouble not yourself for Reputation and Honour, I will take Care to repair it, and before two Days be over, I will restore you to the highest Place you ever had under me.*

*Essex, transported with Joy for the happy Success of this Conference, affected the Queen so much with submissive Acknowledgments that he restored his Spirits to a perfect Tranquility: At parting, she promised to call a Council on the Morrow, and in a glorious Manner to declare him innocent.*

*As soon as it was Day, she sent for Cecil, and the Countess of Nottingham waited on her. Having told them in a few Words, of a great Conflict past between her Justice and her*

Mercy, she concluded for the latter, and ordered *Cecil* to summon the Council, that she might declare to them the Design she had to set *Effex*, at Liberty, assuring him she had invincible Reasons for doing so. This was a mortal Blow to the ambitious *Cecil*, and the Countess of *Nottingham*. They presently looked on one another, as if they would have asked each other's Advice what Course to take. Afterwards they spoke to the Queen in Hopes to divert her, but she was inflexible, and *Cecil* was forced to order an extraordinary Call of Council.

But while the Earl of *Effex*'s Enemies thought his good Fortune on the Point of being reconciled to him, Chance laboured for them with unexpected Success.

As the Queen was going to Council, Word was brought her, the Countess of *Rutland* desired to wait on her. The Queen blush'd, remembering what had pass'd, and looking  
on

on the Request as unseasonable and unlucky, she thought to have put off the Countess to another Time : but considering she used not to deny any Person Access, and that the Countess of *Rutland* was a Lady of the best Quality, she commanded she should be admitted, and the Countess immediately entered.

Tho' her Eyes languished, her looks were sad, her Dress and her Gait very careless, yet her Beauty was conspicuous and moving: she threw herself at the Queen's Feet, and with Extremity of Grief in her Looks, Madam, (says she, with a great deal of Pain) I come to implore your Majesty's Goodness for the unfortunate E. of *Essex*.--For the E. of *Essex*, Madam answered the Q. How come you concerned for him, who hath quitted you with so much Indifference, after so many Promises of extraordinary Kindness? I expected you were rather come to join your Resentments with mine, and desire me to take a



a full *Révenge* for the Injury done to your Beauty. No, Madam, answer'd the Countess, not the Transports of a forsaken Mistress have brought me now into your Majesty's Presence, but the tender Affection due from a virtuous wife to the husband she loves; in begging for the Earl of *Effex*, I beg for mine. This confession may, perhaps, add to our Guilt; but there is no dallying for those who are on the Brink of destruction. I acknowledge Madam, that after various Crosses, we had that tender Kindness one for the other, that we married privately, contrary to the Respect due to your Majesty. This, Madam, and his Fear of your Majesty's just Indignation, put the Earl of *Effex* on seeking Revenge out of your dominions. He thought it fit I should go out of 'em, but never harbour'd a Thought of conspiring against your Majesty. However, this hath ruin'd us, and if you protect not an unfortunate Person, whom you have so much honoured,

noured, he is for ever lost. Consider, Madam, that a few Drops of Blood to your dispose, and a poor Life you are Mistress of, are not a Revenge suitable to the Grandeur of a Queen, adored for many Virtues, yet chiefly for your Clemency.

The Q. was so astonished at the Discourse, that the Countess had Liberty to end without Interruption. But this was sad News to a Heart lately full of the Delights of a pleasing Reconciliation. What a Torrent of Anger overflowed her Constancy: A Queen as she was, high spirited, haughty, and passionately in Love; to see herself thus inevitably betray'd, and to find it out at a time, when a blind Credulity had stifled all former Resentments: Yet she forced herself to dissemble her Grief; and fixed a severe Look on the Countess of *Essex*. The Life you beg of me, says she, is not in my Power, the Peers are his Judges. Ah! Madam, cries the Countess he will be lost if you  
 C 4 give

give him up to their Fury : Their  
 Jealousy will do that which Justice  
 cannot. - Why should you trouble  
 yourself if he be not guilty ? said the  
 Q. Tho' I am well satisfy'd of his  
 Innocence, Madam, answer the Count-  
 ess, yet your cruel Ministers are not  
 disposed to believe it. Let me then in-  
 treat you, Madam, if your Majesty  
 will grant me no more, yet be pleas'd  
 to allow me the Privilege of being put  
 X into the same Prison with him. I am  
 as criminal as he and perhaps more.  
 I wish it was in my power to grant  
 your Desires, says the Q. but com-  
 mon Policy forbids any Correspon-  
 dence to be allowed between so con-  
 siderable Persons, in your Circum-  
 stances : You may, if you please, wait  
 his Fate and your own, in a Chamber  
 in this Palace. Ah ! Madam, replies  
 the beautiful Countess, consider the  
 last Favour I beg of you is, that I may  
 be put in Irons : Can you apprehend  
 we shall attempt any Thing a-  
 gainst you in so deplorable an Estate :  
 This

This is the Eve of our greatest Disaster: That barbarous Justice, to which you absolutely commit the Care of your Vengeance, will Tomorrow, perhaps, part us for ever; deny us not, at least, the Comfort of mixing our last Tears. What can you fear from a Grief without Power—I fear being troubled with it, and I will be obeyed, answers the angry Queen, and goes away into her Clofet, while the Countess of *Essex* was carried to a Chamber, where she was left under Guard.

Never was Fury equal to the Queen's; the Madness she was in, to see herself thus deceiv'd, made her for some Time forget all her Tenderness. Her Thoughts were wholly bent on Revenge, and giving up to the Severity of Justice a guilty Person, she had so passionately loved. Death, says she, shall be the Reward of his Ingratitude, and I will make his Punishment an Example to the Universe.

With these Thoughts she came to the Council. When she had declared herself, the Peers were named for trying the Earls of *Essex* and *Southampton*. Armed as she was with Resolution to do it, she trembled at the doing, and could not forbear mixing some amorous Sighs with the violent Expressions her Anger forced from her. She withdrew under a very great Trouble, and admitted no Visit for several Days.

'Tis hard to express what a pleasant Surprize it was to *Cecil*, to see the Queen angry, and declare herself against *Essex*, whom he thought she resolved to pardon. He carried the News to the Countess of *Nottingham*, who was as joyful at it, as a cruel Person could be on such an Occasion. Yet they could not think all sure, while the Earl of *Essex* was only Prisoner in his House, whence his Friends, if minded to do it, might get him out. They concluded to take the Opportunity of the Queen's Anger,



Anger, to obtain her Order for putting him into the *Tower of London*; which *Cecil*, under a Cloak of Zeal for her Majesty's Service, easily gain'd and readily executed. The Earl of *Essex* was generally beloved; and *Cecil*, fearing Commotions and Tumults, if he should be carried through the City, ordered him to be sent to the *Tower* by Water; which was accordingly done.

The Earl of *Essex*, not able to guess at the Cause of a Success so unsuitable to the Promises of the Queen, prepared himself for the worst that might happen; and in a few Days had Resolution enough to bear his Misfortunes. The Queen was as full of Trouble, as *Cecil* and the Countess of *Nottingham* were in Hopes to see their common Enemy condemned in a few Days.

The Countess of *Essex* having no Comfort but her Tears, nor company but her Fears, endeavoured, from the Pity of her Guards, to have some

In-

Intelligence of her Husband's Condition. She was told his Judges were appointed, and that he was in the *Tower*: Worse News she could not have. The Queen was irreconcilably angry, nor could she by Letter convey with Safety to her Husband the Advice she thought fit for him. A Conference she thought better, and Money being a Charm seldom resisted, she did, by some Presents of Value, prevail with her Guards to serve her to her mind. Having fully possessed them, she neither designed her own Liberty nor her Husband's; all she desired was a Minute's private Discourse with him, which her Guards undertook, and brought happily about. The Guards at the *Tower*, gained by their Companions, easily introduced the Countess into her Husband's Chamber.

He knew nothing of the Passages at *White-hall*; but when he was told he was in a few Days to appear before his Judges he expected with  
a great

a great deal of Resolution and Constancy, the End of his Misfortunes; comforting himself with the Thoughts of the Countess being retired into *Scotland*; but seeing her so near a Danger he thought her so remote; Ah, Madam? says he, with his Eyes full of Tenderness, what came you to look for in these fatal Places? And in whose power was it to bring you hither?—My Grief and my Guards have brought me hither,—answers the Countess. What, Madam, cries the Earl, are you the Queen's Prisoner? And does she know we are married? Yes, replied the Countess mournfully, and is so angry that we are past Hope: I was absenting myself from you, as you desired me, but the News of your Death stopt my Retreat, and it was now not in my Power to betake myself into a Place of Safety, there to attend the Issue of your Troubles; if it were not in my Power to ease you of them, I thought it my Duty at least to share  
with

with you in them. This made me present myself to the Queen, and omit nothing that might move her Compassion; but she proved altogether inflexible. Ah! Madam, says the Earl, interrupting her, your Impatience has ruined us: Had you not appeared I had been at Liberty. By a dexterous Justification, I had regained her Confidence, and you should have, in a few Days, seen me come in Search of you to *Scotland*; but now there are no Hopes, the Queen will be revenged. What, saith the Countess, hath all I have done tended to your Ruin: Make use of your Advantages, I conjure you, the Queen still retains some Tendernefs for you. You may easily revive it. Oh! be not a sacrifice to her Anger. Invent any Thing  
 X in Excuse of our Marriage. Disown it if you please. I will consent to any Thing rather than have you condemned to Death, Let her banish me into any Part of the World; I will go most willingly, And if it may conduce

to your Safety, make Use of the Pledge she gave you.—

Al! Madam! replies the Earl, can you give such Advice to a Man who you know adores you? Have you found, by any of my Actions, that I love my Life more than I love you: No, I love my Life for nothing else, but to spend it with you, and I will part with it with all my Heart, when I must be deprived of that Pleasure. My Fears were only for you, and can you believe I shall have the least Satisfaction in the Queen's Favour, when her Jealousy should make her banish you? Let it break out, let her ruin me, I will glory in my loving you, and telling it to her Face. I know the precious Gift she bestowed on me leaves me some Hopes, and I'll make Use of it, but I would do it with Safety, and it may prevail for more than my Life. I apprehend you, says the Countess; you would reserve all for me, and neglect your own Safety, but



but you cannot incur a Danger, wherein I have not a Share, and the Way to preserve my Life is to secure your's.

This Dispute had lasted longer, but the Countess's Guards minding her it was Time to withdraw, she disposed herself to bid her Husband farewell. Their separation was moving, and accompanied with A bundance of Tears, to which a Multitude of tormenting Inquietudes succeeded, and ushered in a Day, that instead of diminishing, heightened their Sorrows.

*Grace before meat*

*The End of the First Part.*

*Bless to every c.  
Love thy i good creat  
now to bout  
to receive give us  
Strength*

THE SECRET  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
MOST RENOWN'D  
Q. ELIZABETH,  
AND  
Earl of ESSEX.

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By a PERSON of QUALITY.

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COLOGNE:

Printed for *Will with the Wisp*, at the  
Sign of the *Maon in the Ecliptick*.

MDCCLXVII.

<sup>Letter</sup>  
The usage to me is  
to let to be come  
therefore if thou  
Best that spirit whi  
I much Question from  
thy villans for  
villany are always  
Cowards ~~not~~

THE  
Earl of *ESSEX*:  
OR THE  
AMOURS  
OF  
Queen *ELIZABETH*.

PART II.

THE Queen, though angry,  
gave no Order for com-  
prehending the Countess  
of *Essex* in her Hus-  
band's Impeachment. The Morrow  
after their Conference, the Peers  
met in *Westminster-Hall*; the  
Earls

Earls of *Essex* and *Southampton* were brought before them by the Constable of the *Tower*. The Particulars of the Trial are set forth at large in the Histories of that Time. It shall suffice to insert here, that the Prisoners being charged to have held criminal Correspondences with the Kings of *Scotland* and *Spain*, and entered into secret Alliances with *Tyrone*, and traiterously laid and carried on a Plot against the Queen's Authority, made a very stout and resolute Defence.

As politick as *Cecil* was, he could not hide the Malignity of his Intentions, but it was observed, he was not only a severe Judge, but a dangerous Enemy. The Heat and Animosity he discovered against the Earl of *Essex*, were answered by him with a slight Resolution, and undaunted Constancy. Yet, for all he could say in Justification of himself, he was condemned with the Formalities usual on such Occasions.

Sentence



Sentence was pronounced by the Lord High Steward, That the Earls of *Essex* and *Southampton* were guilty of High Treason, and should be beheaded. The Earl of *Essex* was not moved in the least, to hear himself named, but appeared heartily sorry to find the Earl of *Southampton* under like Condemnation, and conjur'd the Judges to examine with less Severity the Conduct of a Person, whose only Crime was, the Love he had for him. But not being able to prevail, he melted into Expressions of the greatest Tenderness in the World for his Friend.

The Queen being informed of the Condition of Things, gave private orders to delay Execution. She was of a high Spirit, and highly provoked, yet found it very difficult to raise her Anger to a Pitch equal to her Tenderness.

*Cecil* trembled to find the Execution of a Sentence deferred, which he had with so much Pleasure heard pronounced.

pronounced. The Countess of *Nottingham* was equally alarm'd.

The Proofs were but slight against the E. of *Southampton*, and the Queen, sensible his long Friendship with the Earl of *Essex* had chiefly engag'd him in the Matters in Charge, pardon'd his Life at the Request of his Friends.

News was brought of it to the Earl of *Essex*, whose truly brave and generous Soul immediately broke forth into sincere Protestations. *He should dye now with Satisfaction and Content, since the Queen has owned, by her pardon, the Innocence of Southampton.*

While the Earl of *Essex* expected, with a resolute Constancy, the Catastrophe of his Tragedy, the Countess, his Wife was informed at *White-Hall* he was executed. 'Till then she believed it uncertain. But this News surpriz'd her so terribly, she filled the whole Court with her Lamen-

Lamentations. The Queen heard them but was not concerned, as the rest were for them. *Let her cry,* says she to the Countess of Nottingham, *she must shed many more, to wipe out the Score of those Tears she hath cost me.*

The Countess of Nottingham was so far from endeavouring to pacify the Queen, that all her Care was to keep up her Anger. And because she was ignorant of many Things, she thought herself concern'd to know, she took Advantage of the Trouble the Countess of Essex was in, and made her frequent Visits; not to bemoan her Afflictions, but to find out something to render her more miserable. It must needs have been an unparrallel'd Cruelty not to pity the handsomest Lady on Earth, appearing to our Eyes in a Condition more deplorable than can be express'd. She fell every Minutè, for very Weakness, into  
D the

the Arms of the Women about her ; and recover'd herself only to lament the more pitifully, which affected all but the Countess of *Nottingham*, who saw all this with an Unconcernedness suitable to the Hardness of her Heart. Ah ! Madam, says the Countess of *Essex*, as soon as she saw her, Will you not use your Interest with the Queen, in favour of the Earl of *Essex* ? You know my Lord of *Southampton* hath his Pardon, replies she, and the Queen, perhaps, will do as much for your Husband. Madam, says the Countess of *Essex*, it is not the Crimes charg'd on my Husband, jointly with the Earl of *Southampton*, nor those common to both, which make the Queen inexorable.—You will understand me, when I tell you, that there are certainly some others she far more deeply resents ; and she hates the Earl of *Essex* rather the less for the Attempts attributed to his Ambition,

tion, than his Engagements with me. But, Madam, replies the Countess of *Nottingham*, (willing to find out the Mystery of their Love, she was as yet ignorant of,) if you thought the Queen would oppose it, or be unsatisfied with it, why did you not quit a Business wherein you were to expect nothing but Crosses? If you were ever in Love, says the Countess of *Essex*, you know very well we have not always our Wits about us, when we are deeply engaged in Affection. However, Madam, when I married my Lord of *Essex*, I did not know the Queen was so much concern'd for him. Perhaps, answers the Countess of *Nottingham*, I might do you some Service, were I thoroughly acquainted with the particular Passages between my Lord of *Essex* and you. I am not in a very fit Disposition to discourse with you Madam, says the Countess of *Essex*; but if I could, by any Confidence, prevail with you to do something in our behalf, I would give you



an Account of all you desire. I will not promise you I shall certainly prevail with the Queen—But, Madam, (adds the cunning Countess of *Nottingham*) I will use my Interest, and perhaps, effect more than we have Reason to hope for.—Have a good Heart, Madam, do not despair; the Queen is good, and I will zealously serve you, when I am instructed what Course to take.

The Countess of *Essex* yielding to the Persuasions of her bitterest Enemy, dry'd up her Tears; and after a short Pause, spoke to this Purpose.

**M**Y Mother died very young, leaving no Child but me. My Father's Offices obliged him to a constant Attendance at Court, he committed the Care of my Infancy to a Sister of his that was settled about an hundred Miles from *London*. He could not at that Distance see me so often as he would, so  
that

that when I came to Fourteen Years of Age, he thought, by disposing me in Marriage, to bring me nearer to him.

The Earl of *Rutland* had but one Son, and the intimate Friendship between my Father and him induc'd them to think of a stricter Alliance. Our Fortunes were equal; and the Earl of *Rutland's* Son being return'd out of *Italy*, his Father acquainted him with his Design of marrying him. His Affection was no way engag'd to the contrary: And the Business was agreed on without my knowledge, who was look'd upon as too young to be consulted with in a Cause of that Nature. Yet, Madam, my Heart was sensible so early, and capable of discerning between Person and Persons; and made it appear by Experience, Obedience and Affection do not always agree.

The Equipage of the young Gentleman was no sooner ready,

but he came where I was. Being not in Love, nor expecting much Pleasure in waiting on a Mistress he had never seen, and was represented to him as a Child, he prayed three of his Friends to honour his Nuptials with their Presence. The  
 X Earl of *Essex* was one of them. When they arrived, my Looks were divided between several Men, all much of an Age, and alike unknown to me. I knew well enough the Earl of *Rutland's* Son was design'd my Husband; and I presently wish'd he was the Man whom  
 X I afterwards knew to be the Earl of *Essex*; at the first Sight of whom all my Trouble for being married so young was presently over. He was the first that spoke to me, and looked on me more earnestly than any of the others. This made me believe it was as I wish'd. But I was sadly undeceiv'd, when the young Earl  
 X of *Rutland* was presented to me. I blush'd and sigh'd, not knowing  
 the

the Cause. The Earl of *Effex* did also the like; his Eyes went still in Search of me, and I was not reserv'd enough to avoid 'em. The Trouble I appear'd in was attributed to the Innocence of my Age, and I quickly learnt to take care to hide it.

Our Parents being arrived, we were married, without being ask'd by them, if we were willing. The Earl of *Rutland's* Son appeared pleased with his Fortune, and perhaps found me more amiable than he expected. I, Madam, was so in Love with the Earl of *Effex*, all I could do, was not to hate my Husband; yet I had the good Luck that my Kindness for my Lord of *Effex* was not so much as suspected.

'Twas believ'd I was then sensible of no other Pleasures, but what Children delight in; but no Age is a Stranger to Love. I quickly knew what it was to have a Kindness; and soon complained the Li-

erty of my Inclination had been usurp'd upon me. I had little Joy in being so fair a Mistress of myself, as to wish I could love my Husband, and endeavour it, and to have an Indifference for the Earl of *Essex*; for all my Efforts to that Purpose were vain.

The first Resolution I took, was to avoid the Sight of a Man, who could only contribute to make me more unhappy. And when he had taken his Leave, with therest of my Lord of *Rutland's* Friends, I pray'd my Father to spare my Youth for some Time, and not to expose me so early to Court, where I never had been: My Desire was granted, and when my Father return'd for *London*, to satisfy me, they took me to *Rutland*.

But the Course I took produc'd not the Effect I propos'd. The Idea of the Earl of *Essex* accompanied me in my Solitude. And my Father-in-Law being dead, we were forc'd  
to



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to go to *London*, after a Year's Stay  
in the Country.

I tremble to think I should see  
the E. of *Essex* again, and resolved  
with myself I would be the most  
retir'd Person on Earth, to avoid all  
Occasions of meeting him, when  
News was brought me, he was gone  
with the Earl of *Leicester* into the  
*Low-Countries*. The Queen receiv'd  
me with that Kindness she usually  
expresses to those she intends to  
honour. I admir'd her Merit, and  
the Pleasure to see myself respected  
by her suspended a while my secret  
Inquietudes.

But within less than half a Year  
my Father died, soon after my Hus-  
band: I was much afflicted at these  
Losses: I bewailed my Father's  
Death a long Time: And if I had  
not for my Husband that great  
Kindness, which is very seldom  
met with in Marriages of Obedi-  
ence, my Reason, and his Com-  
plaisance, had forc'd me to esteem

him, and to express Acknowledgements sincere enough, to save me the Trouble of any just Reproach from myself, or any other.

The Queen having told me, she desir'd to have me near her, I quit-  
ted my House for an Apartment in  
this Palace; and my Fortune, which  
was very considerable, gave me  
such Charms, as drew about me  
a Number of Suitors, who pre-  
tended a mighty Kindness for me;  
but were really rather a Trouble  
than Pleasure to me.

In this Consideration was I, when  
the Earl of *Essex* return'd to *Lon-  
don*. The Queen's Army had been  
victorious, and she order'd a pub-  
lick Thanksgiving when the Gene-  
rals arriv'd. I waited on her to  
*St. Paul's*, and had not the Power,  
by any Consideration, to be so re-  
serv'd, as not to single out from  
all the Nobility in the Kingdom,  
the Earl of *Essex* alone, to fix my  
Eyes on.

The

The Morrow he was one of the first to wait on the Queen. I was with her before; and was mov'd at the Sight of him. We look'd on one another several Times with equal Concern. Madam, cry'd he, as soon as he could speak to me, I have not had a Moment's Liberty to signify to you, how great a Share I bear in your Losses. I believe, answer'd I, you are sorry for my Misfortune. 'Tis natural for every one to be concern'd for such a Person as you are, adds he; but, Madam, I am much more concern'd than any other.

The Queen interrupted us, but in all the Respects the Earl of *Essex* paid her, I could not but perceive his Eye was towards me. I confess I was glad to see him so eager, and perhaps I answer'd him a little too soon; but I was young, tender, and independent. His Merits were then extraordinary, and he had the Advantage of my first Inclination.

He came the same Day to see me  
in

in my Apartment, and fail'd not to do it constantly afterwards. All his Actions persuaded me at length that he lov'd me; and it was not long e'er he let me know it.

Madam, said he, one Evening, having brought me to my Chamber, after I had left the Queen, do you remember the Time I accompany'd the Earl of *Rutland* to your Country-House? I have not forgot, Sir, answer'd I, that you were one of 'em that did him that Honour. Is that all you remember of it? adds he: Did you observe nothing in my Eyes worthy your Notice? And was it possible you should inspire into me so much Love, without feeling the Power of it yourself? The Friendship I had for the E. of *Rutland*, and the Progress he had made, prevented my speaking of it; yet Time and Absence have but increas'd my Passion, and I protest sincerely, from the first Moment I saw you, my Heart was never affected with any but yourself.

A

A Discourse of this Nature may perhaps be thought unsuitable to the Condition I was then in ; who mourned for a Father and a Husband ; yet I had not the Power to be offended with it : The Earl of *Essex* assur'd me, I had gain'd his Affection ; I was willing to gain his, and car'd for no more.

You will give me leave, Madam, to pass over my Answers, and tell you only the Earl of *Essex* was very well satisfied with them ; that we then settled the Correspondence we have so long maintained ; and that we found Occasions and Opportunities to polish and perfect it.

Thus far you see me ignorant of the Queen's Inclinations ; I, as well as others, attributed the Favour we saw the Earl of *Essex* was in, to his Services, and his Dexterity in setting them out to Advantage. But in Time I perceived my Mistake ; and, as reserved as the Queen was, found out



out the Myſtery, and trembled at the Diſcovery.

The Earl of *Effex* had an elevated Soul, and capable of Greatneſs. Ambition might rob me of him, and I was willing to fortify myſelf againſt all Miſfortunes, and to reſerve only an Eſteem for him. But what Hopes of doing that now, which all my Reason and two Years Marriage had not effected?

At laſt Jealouſy ſucceeded my Fears; and I began to believe, the Reſpect the Earl of *Effex* had for the Queen might proceed from a ſecret Affection. I fretted at this, and grieved at the Heart. The Earl perceived it, and ſolicited me long to tell him the Cauſe. I reſuſed as long as I was able. I am jealous, ſaid I to him at laſt, with a little Heat, and afraid I ſhould loſe your Affection. 'Tis not an Unhappineſs, ſaid he, to ſee you love me ſo; as to doubt of me: But there is no Cauſe to queſtion my Faithfulneſs, who never  
lov'd

lov'd any but you. The Q. loves you, cry'd I, and her Kindness for you, with the Advantages of her Grandeur, may be dangerous Temptations to your Perseverance. The Q. love me, Madam! replies he: How do you interpret her accustomed and ordinary Bounty, which hath, perhaps too generously recompenced my Services beyond their Merits? She is too haughty, and too great a Mistress of herself, to fall into such a Weakness. You know what illustrious Alliances she hath slighted; and are to believe she's above the Reach of Love. There is not a Monarch upon the Earth, but I would prefer you before him, cry'd I, and measuring the Queen's Affection by mine, I am easily persuaded she may do so too; her Eye is always upon you, maugre all her Precautions, and is never else satisfied; and I have observ'd some Sighs from her, which a Heart concern'd as mine cannot hear without Trouble. I did not till now know how happy I was,

says

says the E. of *Essex*, but your Jealousy makes me sensible of it. Yet, Madam, give me Leave to assure you, you have no Cause for it. Were the Q. weak, as you imagine; did she offer me her Crown and her Kindness, I would by a Refusal, let you see, though I have Ambition, my Love for you infinitely exceeds it. To satisfy you of your Mistake, allow me to procure her Consent to our Marriage. You have mourned sufficiently to avoid all Imputations of Indecency. It is in your Power to make me the happiest of Men, and to clear the Doubts you have of my Faithfulness.

I was far from opposing the Proposal he had made, and I was not fully convinc'd the Queen was in Love with him; yet, I thought if she was, he knew it not.

To let you see, adds he, I will not conceal from you any Kindness the Q. hath express'd for me, I declare I sacrifice to you one of the handsomest Ladies of the Court, who hath  
a thousand

a thousand Ways invited my Love.

I press'd him to let me know her Name, but he conjured me to be satisfied with what he had said, and not to force him to any further Indiscretion. I gave over pressing him.

[The Countess of *Nottingham* blush'd at this Part of the Discourse, having Reason to believe herself the Person intended. She hated him the more for it ; but had the Command of herself, not to interrupt the Countess of *Essex*, who proceeded in her Story.

This Freedom of the Earl put an End to my Suspicions. I left him to take his Time for speaking to the Queen: When he went to thank her for the Government of *Ireland*, bestowed on him, he returned to me with Transports of Joy, to tell me the Queen had not only consented to his Desires, but intended to make the Earl of *Leicester* King of *England*.

*land.* This quieted my Spirits, and made me acknowledge, I had no Cause to be jealous.

We spent some Days with a great deal of Pleasure, but were cruelly interrupted by the Order the Earl of *Effex* received to go into *France*, to command the Forces the Queen sent in Aid of that King. I had not Time to express my Grief to him, or to be a Witness of his: We parted in Haste; and then it was I repented I had believed him; and the Queen's Coldness towards me convinced me of the Truth of my former Suspicion: and that her sending away the Earl of *Effex*, was but to remove him from me.

I left the Court as soon as I could with Decency ask the Queen Leave to retire to a House of my Father's, about fifty Miles from *London*——I will not tell you how I was alarm'd at the News of the Earl of *Effex*'s Death, in his Return



turn from *Spain*, nor how we writ  
to one another in his Absence. I  
was ready to die for Grief, when  
he arrived at my House more re-  
spectful, and more amorous than  
he had ever appeared.

He would have put me out of my  
Opinion concerning the Queen, but  
I severely maintained it true; and,  
when I had convinced him of it, he  
offer'd to leave *England*, if I would  
name a Place where we might live  
quietly. I had then Affection enough  
to incline me to consent to this Pro-  
posal; but considering it unjust in  
me to spoil the Progress of his  
good Fortune, and to put a Period  
to his Hopes, by an unexcusable  
Retreat, I told him it was impos-  
sible: And ushering with a Sigh  
the Advice I was going to give  
him, Forget me, Sir, said I, for  
I see your Fate will force you to  
it; the Queen will still cross us,  
and never want Pretence to se-  
parate us: 'Tis better breaking  
off

off an Engagement that suits not with your Affairs. Nothing in the World can be a greater Misfortune to me, but I will submit to it, if it be for your Good. You suspect me of Indifference, said he, interrupting me, and you have the Cruelty to advise me to it. Did you love me more, you would know me better; And, were I capable of doing an unjust Thing, I believe you would exhort me to forget you, for no other Cause, but that you might think of me no more. But, Madam, to shorten our Discourse, and our Doubts, which almost makes me mad, believe it, I love you above all Things in the World. There is a sure and easy Way to satisfy you of it: You are not willing to go with me out of *England*, and yet you are still afraid of the Queen.

X Let us marry privately, and Conceal it till we see a more favourable Time; this will frustrate the Queen's Design to our Prejudice, you will

no

no longer doubt of my Affection, and if the Business be discover'd, 'tis but flying out of the Reach of the Resentment we fear.

I was strangely mov'd at this Discourse, every Thing then oblig'd me to believe him. Yet considering it would reflect upon my Reputation to be privately married, I was afraid to consent. The Earl complained to me; I cried: Love was our Arbitrator, and decided the Controversy in his Favour. After long Resistance, I agreed to a private Marriage, on Condition the Earl would go for *London* on the Morrow, and appear disengag'd to the Queen from all the Kindness he had for me. We agreed to be married at the Earl of *Southampton's*, his particular Friend, where I was to stay, while he went for *London*. Thus we parted. He took *London* Road, I went for *Southampton*, attended by *Tracy*, and a Domestick of the Earl of *Essex's*,  
in

in whom he repos'd an intire Confidence.

As the Earl was on the Road, he had Leisure to consider what Measures to take. My Lord *Southampton* came to receive me at his House; where the E. of *Essex* arriv'd soon after he had obtain'd Leave from the Queen to absent himself for a few Days.

We are now come to the Instant that usher'd in our Crosses. We were married in the Presence of my Lord *Southampton* *Tracy*, and some Women of note, and a Kinsman of the Earl of *Essex*. He gave me an Account how the Queen had receiv'd him, and began to confess, he believ'd she lov'd him.

He staid but six Days at *Southampton*, in which Time we agreed what Course to take.

I was too far from *London* to see the Earl often, without discovering our Correspondence. And nothing seem'd more proper to conceal

ceal it, than a House he had within a few Miles of *London*, on the *Thames-Side*. It stood alone, and was strong enough to prevent a Surprize. Having settled my Affairs, I was conducted thither by my Lord *Southampton* and *Tracy*, while the Earl of *Effex* returned for *London*.

Nothing could be more pleasant than the Solitude I was in. My Lord of *Effex* came to see me every Day; And I spent there two Years without a Moment's Trouble. At last, an Accident happen'd that miserably perplex'd us.

The Earl of *Effex* had aundance of Enemies who maligned him; and for all his Caution, they observ'd his extraordinary Affiduity for the House I was in. They told the Queen of it. She was disturb'd at it, more, perhaps, for the Suspicion she had of some private Gallantry of his there, than for those Matters they would have possess'd her with.

I gave



I gave her no Trouble : The Earl's Disengagement, with my pretended Journey into *France*, had secur'd her as to me. Yet she was resolv'd to go to see whether the Earl frequented the House only for the Pleasure of the Place, or some hidden Cause.

One Day, as the Earl was with her, she gave Orders her ordinary Retinue should be ready to wait on her. I have long had a Mind to see your Country-house, says she to the Earl, I have had a very pleasant Description of it : The Weather is fair, and I believe a Walk so far may do me good.

You may imagine the Fears this put the Earl in : He durst not openly oppose her Design, but endeavoured to divert it, by saying, His House deserved not the Pains she would take in going so far.

When he saw her resolv'd upon it, he begg'd Leave to go before, to put Things in order for her Reception.

tion. No [says she] you shall be my Guide: There's no need of Preparation.

The Earl at these Words trembled for me. He was depriv'd of all means of Precaution, and the Concern he appeared in, made the Queen more curious.

Imagine what a Trouble he was in by the Way, and how often he wish'd something might hinder their Arrival. But Fortune favour'd the Queen's Design so far, that they came safe to the House, and she would presently go and see the Lodgings. The Earl astonish'd, gave her his Hand. The Chamber I us'd, was the best of the House, the first the Queen staid at: The Earl seeing no Remedy, steps to the Door, which he found open, contrary to Custom, and was pleasingly surpriz'd, to find only *Tracy* there, sleeping, or rather pretending to sleep on a Couch. He was quickly awak'd, and having express'd his Surprise, and Respect, immediately withdrew.

E

The

The Earl of *Essex*, who thought him at *London*, began to take heart, fancying his good Genius had revealed the Adventure to *Tracy*.—But a new Trouble arose, my Picture hung in the same Room, under a Curtain. The Queen ask'd, If it was not the Earl's? He answer'd, with some Trouble, It was not. The Queen drew the Curtain, and saw herself drawn at length, where the Earl thought my Picture would appear: Then it was he was perswaded the faithful *Tracy* had an Intimation of the Journey.

The Q. expressed much Joy to see her Picture in the Earl's Chamber.

From the House she went into the Garden, took a short Repast, during which, *Tracy* found the Opportunity to wisper the Earl, He need not trouble himself—and return'd to *London* without the least Suspicion.

Thus Matters pass'd on their Sides. As to ours, the very Instant the Q. told the Earl of *Essex*, she would see his  
his

his House, the Earl of *Southampton* was at her Chamber-Door: You are come in good Time, to go with the Queen to the Earl of *Essex's*, says the Officer who was going to provide the Equipage.

The Earl of *Southampton* by these few Words, quickly discovered the Storm that threatened his Friend: And to provide a Remedy: I am not very well, said he to the Officer, perhaps the Queen may command me to wait on her, I will not go into her Presence. Pray let her not know you have seen me. The Officer promis'd she should not, and *Southampton* hasten'd to the Earl of *Essex's* to tell *Tracy*, who immediately took the best Horse his Master had, and rode so fast, that he was with me before the Queen left *London*.

I was not a little troubled at the News. *Tracy* hid me and my Woman, in a Quarter, where was no Likelihood of our being discovered, and then chang'd the Queen's Picture for mine.

That Evening the Earl of *Essex* came to see me, and gave me an Account of the Tortures he had that Day endur'd for me; and how *Southampton* and *Tracy* delivered him out of them.

The *Irish* rebell'd; I lay in at that Time. The Earl of *Essex*, who lov'd me no less than his Glory, had within himself desperate Conflicts. His Duty prevail'd: He desir'd he might Command the Army, the Queen granted it; and the same Time declar'd her Affection for him, which I was before but too well assured of. She gave Abundance of very kind Expressions, and (to confirm the Truth of them) a Ring, which still leaves the poor Earl of *Essex* some Hopes.

He was sufficiently prepared to manage the Queen: and you see, by this Time, Madam, whether he was not under a Necessity of some Diffimulation.

He gave me a faithful Account of  
all



all that pass'd between them, and being fearful for me in his Absence, resolved to remove me, and to go himself out of *England*, if Matters were discovered.

This put him in Search of some Place of Refuge. The king of *Scots* promis'd him, among others, the Palace of *Dimburg*. The Earl of *Tyron* made him many proposals, but certain it is, he never hearken'd to any of them.

I was weak when he left me, and oblig'd to recover a little Strength, before I could undertake a Voyage for *Scotland*.

I was on my way, Fortune stay'd me, the Earl of *Essex* was charged with several Matters, and the Queen, prepossess'd by our Enemies, took our innocent Precautions for Crimes.

At last Madam, the Earl was forced to come and shut himself up in the Place where I was, and was resolved to perish in Defence of me.

You know what followed. Consi-

der the Frights I was in, amidst so much Trouble and Blood I saw every Day spilt.

The Earl conjured me incessantly to quit a Place where he could not make any long defence, in Opposition to so many Forces, as were employed to take it.

I exhorted him to yeild, and implore the Queen's Goodness. He protested he would never do it, till I was in a Place of Safety.

Thus was I forced to leave him, and go for *Dimburg*. The faithful *Tracy* who should have conducted me thither, had perished already in maintaining the Interest of his Master.

The Earl of *Essex* committed me to the Charge of one of his Kinmen, they forced me out of his Arms, to put me on board a Boat that waited for us on the *Thames*, and was to carry us to the Place where our Convoy attended us.

My Fears and Grief put me into a Fever. This staid me some Days at  
a little

a little Village, where I had News of the Earl's Imprisonment, and the Queen's Resolution to ruin him. ✕

The Extremity of my Despair put me on the Resolution of presenting myself to the Queen, and endeavouring to obtain some Favour by an ingenuous Confession, but Madam, you know, I found in her no Disposition to pardon us.

My Conduct hath produced a terrible Effect, and I may justly reproach myself, to have been the Cause of all my Lord of *Effex*'s Misfortunes.

This Discourse ended in Tears. The Countess of *N.* took small Care to stop them: She was too much concerned in more than one Part of the Story, which heightened her Fury: and leaving the Countess of *Effex*, to the Horror of Despair, she returned to the Queen, whom she found almost drowned in Tears. She used all her Art to revive the Queen's Anger, and by her cruel Address, effected her Design, without saying a

Word directly against the Criminal.

*Cecil* and she were tormented to see the Execution delayed.

What shall we do, Madam? says he to her if the Queen, in the very heighth of her Anger, will not give Way that Justice be done, what are we to expect when her Anger is over? What are we not to fear from her Love if it once gets the Master of a Heart as her's is? 'Tis no where so imperious, no where so absolute, and I very much doubt whether all our Caution can prevent the ill Effect of it. In a Word, condemned as the Earl of *Essex* is, by an august Assembly, 'tis possible he may recover his former Favour with the Queen, and utterly ruin us, as soon as he sets footing at Court. I shall stir myself a little e'er that comes to pass (says the Countess of *Nottingham*) I have the Queen's Ear: — And I know how to speak, I am not suspected, nor am I a Stranger to the Secrets of the one or the other: Yet we are  
not

not to flatter ourselves, the Earl of *Effex* is Master of his Fortune. If he petition, the Queen will not have Power to deny him.—He hath a Pledge, which gives him an absolute Power over her: But thanks to his Pride he will not make use of it; besides, whom can he employ in an Affair of this Nature, but we can easily corrupt. I will not leave the Queen, and I'll pawn my Life, I'll secure all with her. Do your Part, and lets not be surpriz'd.

*Cecil* knew the Countess of *Nottingham* too well to doubt of what she said, he parted better satisfied, and thought of nothing but what flattered their common Hatred against *Effex*.

The Queen had a very ill Night, tormented equally with Sickness and Trouble. She considered the Unfaithfulness of the Earl of *Effex*, his plotting against her Authority, his private Marriage, his giving himself wholly up to the Pleasures of it,



while he pretended to be entirely at her Devotion, and his Pride in the Depth of his Misfortunes.

She thought sometimes these Reflections strong enough to enable her to see him die; but presently the pleasant Idea of him she would destroy, his Merit, his Services, and the natural Inclinations she had for him inspired her again with more gentle Resolutions. She thought it better to see him a Criminal, than never see him more. The Thoughts of his Execution put her almost beside herself, tho' it was in her Power to prevent it.

The Countess of *Nottingham* was as wakeful as the Queen, tho' for very different Reasons, and waiting on her in the Morning as usual, You find me in a lamentable Condition, says the Q. and if you help not to comfort me, I shall not be able to endure it much longer. The Wretch who caused me all this Trouble, is always before my Eyes, in the most pitiful Condition imaginable. Is it possible

possible I should do nothing for him in such an Extremity ! Shall I permit him to perish, as if I do not value him more than another, when I have declared to him, I loved him ! Shall I reproach myself one Day with Cruelty, to have forsaken him when it was in my Power to save him ! What your Majesty shall be pleased to do in his Favour, replies the Countess of *Nottingham*, will be the more generous ; for he hath not solicited for it ; if he petitioned, your Bounty would be looked upon as an Effect of your pity, and his Submission : But now it will proceed purely from your Goodness.

These Words affected partly what she aimed at. The Queen blushed, and was silent a-while.

It must be confessed (proceeds she) That to do all for him, without putting him to the Cost of one Sign of Repentance, is to approve of his Pride, and encourage him to carry it on to the highest Extremities. He

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would have my Kindness do all; and without any reflection on the Outrages he hath done me; 'He believes I shall think myself happy too in holding the Executioner's Hand. Never doubt, Madam, (says the Countess) but he makes account to triumph still over that Goodness your Majesty hath always made appear towards him. Had he been carried from *Westminster* to the Scaffold, had you given him a Sight of that Scene of Death, and pardoned *Southampton*, whithout Respiting the other's Execution, he had been glad to make use of any Means in his Power to move you to Mercy. But he knows the Power he had over You: and pretends that by receiving a Pardon he vouchsafed not to Petition for all the World will believe him innocent. But, Madam, if Matters be carried on thus, what will be thought of the Justice of the Kingdom, what will the World judge of your Majesty? There is not a Person ignorant

rant of this Adventure ; and if the Earl of *Effex* without acknowledging his Crimes, sees himself at Liberty, will it not be said, that *England* is govern'd by a Queen not so discreet as fame reports her to be ?

At this *Cecil* arriv'd, and fortify'd extreamly the Countess of *Nottingham's* party, he seconded her, with all the Art of a cruel Eloquence, to persuade the Queen she was concerned in Honour the Earl of *Effex* should die.

The Queen in a Pet, consented he should be executed suddenly ; and *Cecil* lost no Time, in carrying her Orders to those who were to be Actors in the Execution.

The Earl of *Effex*, as the Countess of *Nottingham* had shrewdly guessed, had no Thoughts of petitioning for a Favour, which, in all Probability the Queen's Kindness would of itself freely grant him. But when he saw himself on the Point of being carried to the Place of Execution,

he thought it his Duty not to neglect the Medicines he had in his Power, to bring about the Queen. Then he resolv'd to implore her Mercy, and put her in Mind of her Promises and Oaths. And knowing the Countess of *Nottingham* was her Favourite and Confident, tho' he had Cause to believe, she had no great Kindness for him, he was perswaded she might have Generosity enough to serve him in this important Mediation.

He sent to desire the Favour of a Visit from her. The Countess, impatient to know the Cause, went directly to him, without acquainting the Queen.

Who but a *Barbarian*, could have seen the Earl of *Essex's* Person, and at the same Time known his Misfortune, without being melted into Compassion ? Yet the Countess of *Nottingham*, at the Sight of him, was all Cruelty and Revenge ; but feigning some Sweetness, she gave him a Way to declare himself thus : Can  
you,



you, Madam, pardon the most unfortunate of Men, the Trouble he gives you, at a Time when he hath no Cause to flatter himself you have any Remains of Kindness for him ; yet nothing can be now a greater Advantage to me, than your Protection. I know the Power you have over the Queen, and would you be pleased to join it to my Sorrow and Repentance for having offended her, I doubt not but we may prevail much. Tell her then, Madam, continues he, putting his Knee to the Ground, that you have seen me in this suppliant Posture, full of Grief for having deserved her hatred. Restore her this Ring which I have kept, and intreat her to remember the Promises she made when she gave it me. I beg my Life by this Pledge, and she cannot deny it me, without forgetting her Oaths. I can no longer look on Life as a Thing pleasant to me ; but a miserable Wife, and the Interest of a Son, press me to continue

tinue it as long as I can. I cannot think the Innocence of the one, nor the Infancy of the other, needs my Justification. The Favour to be begg'd of the Queen is for me alone.

The Countess of *Nottingham* was transported with Joy to see the Earl trust her with the Ring, which had so many Times alarm'd her, and whose Power *Cecil* was still afraid of. She frankly promis'd what she had not the least Intent to do for the Earl of *Essex*, added feign'd Tears to her false Promises, and assured him she would directly go use her utmost Interest with the Queen in his Favour.

But instead of going to the Queen to give her an Account of her Visit, she went to *Cecil*, who waited for her, praised her Cruelty, and had the pleasure to see in his power, the sole Obstacle against *Essex's* Death. They went together to the Queen, who asking, How *Essex* received her last Orders.

He

He was never observed so haughty, Madam, answered *Cecil*, he cannot prevail with himself to shew the least Sign of Repentance. He thinks of nothing but his Wife, and she is the whole Subject of his Discourse to those who go to him. Let him die then, let him perish, (says the Queen, very angry) since he will have it so. Let me be eas'd of the tormenting Uncertainties and Disquiets I am under—I am no longer against his Execution.

This zealous Minister was unwilling to leave the Queen the least Time of Reflection. And while the Earl of *Essex* was in Expectation of the Effect of the unfaithful Countess of *Nottingham*, Provision was made for his Execution in the *Tower*, to avoid a Rebellion among the People who lov'd him.

His Soul was naturally great, and discover'd not the least Weakness in his last Extremity.

Never

Never did Man go to his Death with more Constancy and Firmness, he did not murmur in the least against the Queen, tho' he might have reproach'd her with Promises. He mounted the Scaffold resolutely, undress'd himself, recommended his Family to those about him, and having drawn Tears from all Eyes that were Spectators of that last Act of his Life, he received his Death, without so much as giving Leave his Eyes should be cover'd.

⊕ Thus dy'd this famous Favourite of Queen *Elizabeth*, one of the best qualified Men in the World, and a Man who had been too happy, had not Love had too great a Power over him.

Soon after the Queen had consented he should be executed, she relaps'd into her former Irresolutions, and after a sharp Conflict within herself, she resolv'd to pardon him, and sent an Officer of her Guards to forbid their proceeding further; but it was  
too

too late, *Cecil* had foreseen what might happen, and cruelly provided against the Effects of her Relapse into former kindness. The Earl of *Essex* was already executed, and that was the Answer he carry'd the Queen.

Then it was she lost her ordinary Moderation; then her Grief broke out publickly.

*Cecil*, says she, what Mischief has your barbarous Zeal and Impatience done me!

With that she burst into Tears, and would not endure the Caresses or Comforts of any about her.

While the Queen abhorred herself for the Orders her Anger had given *Cecil*, who had so faithfully caused them to be executed, enjoyed the Pleasure of having procured them: And the Countess of *Nottingham* triumph'd in herself, for the Revenge she had taken of one who had all along slighted her Charms.

'Tis impossible to express the Grief of the Countess of *Essex*, the  
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most stony Hearts had Tears for her. The Queen, whose anger was dead with the Earl, sent to comfort her, and assure her, she was at her Liberty, and might dispose of her Husband's Estate.

Let her take my Life, and keep her Pity to herself, says the mourning Countess to the Queen's Messenger, she hath robbed me of all that made my Life dear unto me, and 'tis not in her power to repair the Mischief she has done me.

The Earl of *Essex's* Friends finding her at present incable of Comfort, even from them whom she esteemed highly, for their Love to the Earl, took her from *London*, in Hopes that Time might make her susceptible of that Consolation, which the Violence of her present Sorrows rendered altogether vain.

As for the Queen, she languished out the rest of her Life. The only Comfort she had, was to think the Earl of *Essex* had slighted her to his

his Death, and never made her any Submission.

The Countess of *Nottingham* had but small Joy of her faithless Life. A violent Malady seized her, and made her sensible of the Horrors of Death: Remorse of Conscience tormented her: the Ghost of the late Earl of *Essex*, whose Death her Cruelty occasioned, seemed to haunt her incessantly. being at the Point of Death, she could not depart without acknowledging her Crime to the Queen. Having begged one Moment's Audience, she confessed all that had pass'd between the Earl of *Essex* and her, the Love she had for him, the implacable Hatred that succeeded it, and her Presidiousness in keeping the Ring he had intrusted her with. With that she presented the Ring to the Queen, who was ready to die at the receiving it, and was within very little of making the Dying Countess feel the violence of her Resentment.

Wretch

Wretch ! cries she, with Looks full of Indignation, What Remorse hast thou expos'd me to ? Whether Heaven will pardon thy Crimes I know not ; sure I am, I shall never forget them.

Having thus said, the Queen went out, and the Countess in a few days died.

This prov'd a mortal blow to the Queer's Health ; who not long after died, uncomforted for the Earl of *Essex*.

*Cecil* had lov'd the Countess of *Nottingham* too well to be so easily comforted by her's.

By the Death of Queen *Elizabeth* the Crown of *England*, pass'd into the Illustrious House of the *Stuarts* whose Right it was. And King *James*, after a glorious Reign, left it to his Posterity, for the Repose of his Kingdoms.

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